

Appl. No. 10/723,006
Amdt. dated October 10, 2006
Reply to Office Action of July 13, 2006

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REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Office Action mailed July 13, 2006. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following comments. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowability of claims 2, 3 and 11 if rewritten in independent form including any intervening claims. Claim 1 has been amended to include the elements previously found in claim 2, which has subsequently been canceled. Claim 3 has been amended to update its dependency. Claim 6 has been amended to include the elements previously found in claims 9, 10 and 11, which have subsequently been canceled. Claim 12 has been canceled. No new matter has been added as a result of these amendments.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claims 1, 4, 5 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over JP 2002-311333 in view of Lemelson et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,400,835. Claim 12 has been canceled, leaving claims 1, 4 and 5 subject to this rejection. Claim 1 has been amended to include the elements of claim 2, which has been indicated as allowable, thereby rendering the rejection moot. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claims 6-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Lemelson et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,400,835, in view of Shimomura et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,879,247. Claim 6 has been amended to include the elements of claim 11, which has been indicated as allowable, as well as intervening claims 9 and 10, thereby rendering the rejection moot. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

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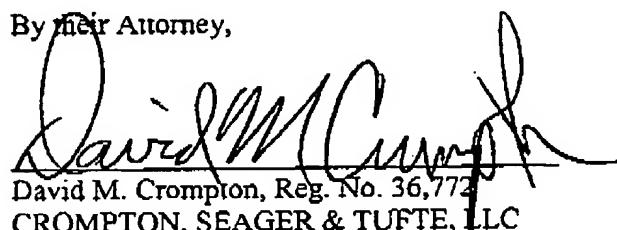
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Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is requested. If a telephone conference might be of assistance, please contact the undersigned attorney at (612) 677-9050.

Respectfully submitted,

Takashi Ichikawa et al.

By their Attorney,



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